

Sen. Church is group's target in Idaho

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By Patrick Riordan
Knight Ridder Service

BOISE, Idaho — For 14 months Idaho voters have been bombarded by television and radio commercials that portray Sen. **Frank Church** (D-Idaho) as a radical leftist run amok.

The commercials are presented by a well-financed conservative group called Anyone But Church, which says the liberal senator has single-handedly crippled the CIA, com-

promised the nation's defense and wasted tax dollars by the billions.

The charges and Sen. Church's reaction to them constitute what may well be a prototype campaign contest for the 1980s between a growing and well-heeled conservative movement and a leading liberal office-holder.

Sen. Church's reaction includes describing his opponent, Rep. Steve Symms (R-Idaho), as a stooge for Big Oil and a congressional lightweight who is the willing tool of

out-of-state right-wing extremists.

There is a reason why the mudslinging has begun so early in Idaho.

The reason is the nation's richest nonparty political group, the National Conservative Political Action Committee (NCPAC), which has headquarters in Arlington, Va. It has raised \$3.2 million and spent \$3.1 million this **election** year, according to Federal **Election** Commission records.

NCPAC raises its money nationally, but spends it selectively. This year its principal targets are a handful of incumbent liberal Democratic senators. Its principle tactic is repetitive negative propaganda about the incumbent.

"We're trying to make it disrespectful to be for

Frank Church," said Don Todd, who created the Anyone But Church group in January 1979 and has since converted it to a NCPAC project.

"We must be getting to them," Todd said. "They're calling us all kinds of names, comparing us with the Nazis. All we've called **Frank Church** is liberal."

Besides Church, NCPAC is vigorously opposing the **election** bids of Democratic sens. Alan Cranston of California, George McGovern of South Dakota, Birch Bayh of Indiana and John Culver of Iowa. Massive NCPA mailings have attacked all five.

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Liberals targets of propaganda drive

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A sample of the anti-Church literature comes from Anyone But Church's most recent fund-raising appeal, mailed to 30,000 home nationally. Calling Church "one of the architects of the era of appeasement," it blames him for the hostage crisis in Iran, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and the presence of Soviet troops in Cuba and Cuban troops in Africa.

"From selling out our Free China allies in favor of Red China to dumping our longtime allies in Nicaragua to abandoning the Shah of Iran for the ayatollah's hoards, Frank Church's record of complicity is shameful," the letter said.

That letter was signed by John T. (Terry) Dolan, NCPAC's chairman, who said of his campaign technique last year: "By 1980 there will be people voting against Frank Church without remembering why."

In March he added: "We could elect Mickey Mouse to the House or Senate under the right circumstances."

Dolan's candidate in Idaho, Steve Symms, is not supporting the anti-Church campaign, however much he may benefit from it. Under a 1976 Supreme Court ruling, organizations like Anyone But Church are exempt from federal campaign spending limits, but only if they remain unconnected to any individual candidate. The group plans to spend \$150,000, Todd said, compared with Church's \$1.3 million in budget and Symms' \$1 million.

Church campaigners characterize Symms' record in the House as one of ineffectiveness and impotence. They blame his inability to pass a single bill in eight years on

his position on the extreme right on many issues — even so-called "motherhood" issues.

Sen. Church aides say Symms often has been in the extreme minority — on the short ends of a 389-4 House vote on school lunch program funding, a 402-4 vote on solar energy, a 374-2 vote on emergency unemployment compensation, a 357-3 vote on aid to victims of mental retardation and cerebral palsy. On May 8 he was one of 56 House members who voted to kill the food stamp program.

Symms' campaign director, Philip Reburger, said his candidate's negative votes on such programs indicate no lack of compassion, but show his overriding concern for balancing the federal budget.

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